

Weekly American

DEVOTED TO POLITICS, LITERATURE,

AND AGRICULTURE, NEWS, AND GENERAL MISCELLANY.

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PROSPECTUS OF THE WASHINGTON AMERICAN.

We can hardly think it necessary to urge upon those who hold that Americans ought to rule America, the importance of having a paper at the seat of the Federal Government, which shall enunciate and advocate the doctrines of the American party.

A paper issued from any of the great centres of a nation, but especially from the political Metropolis, in the present age, not in this country only, but in Great Britain, France, and wherever there is the least freedom of discussion, is a medium through which those holding similar sentiments in regard to public affairs and public policy, may make known, discuss and defend their views, and expose the impropriety of the principles, and the impolicy of the measures of their antagonists. It should earnestly labor to give a proper direction to public opinion by enlightening the public mind.

The American is the only paper published at the seat of the Federal Government which advocates American doctrines; the only sentiment of the party stationed where a near and clear view can be had of the movements and doings of their opponents at their headquarters. Here political information concentrates, and from hence it radiates to every part of the empire; here party measures and movements are determined, and political campaigns planned; here stratagems are concocted and thwarted, and here at certain seasons of the year political parties most do congregate; here, in short, is the centre of the great political maelstrom in which so many thousands are constantly plunging and forever gyrating.

If the American party is desirous of being a national party, it should not be without a paper before it through which it can make known to all people its views, aims and opinions, and which shall also reflect the columns that are from time to time uttered against it through ignorance or a less excusable motive; and we, therefore, take hope that the Americans, standing, as it will stand, upon the platform of the American party, advocating, as it will advocate, the paramount rights of native-born citizens, eschewing, as it will eschew, all interference with slavery as a national concern, and maintaining, as it will maintain, perfect freedom of opinion and of conscience in religion, will find favor in the eyes of all truly patriotic citizens in the land, and commend itself to their generous support.

Last we may not have been specific enough in declaring our principles, we add, that the FAREWELL ADDRESS of the Father of his country, as illustrated by the broad light of his administration, is our political text-book and *code morum*; and shall be our compass and chart.

PLATFORM.

Of the American Party, organized at the session of the National Council, June 5, 1857.

1st. An humble acknowledgment to the Supreme Being, for His protecting care vouchsafed to our fathers in their successful Revolutionary struggle, and hitherto manifested to us, their descendants, in the preservation of the liberties, the independence, and the union of these States.

2d. The perpetuation of the Federal Union, as the palladium of our civil and religious liberties, and as the only sure bulwark of American Independence.

3d. The American must rule America, and to this end, native-born citizens should be selected for all State, Federal, and municipal offices or government employment, in preference to all others:—*exclusively.*

4th. Persons born of American parents residing temporarily abroad, should be entitled to all the rights of native-born citizens; but

5th. No person should be selected for political office (whether of State or foreign birth), who has accepted any allegiance or obligation of any description to any foreign prince, potentate or power, or who refuses to recognize the Federal and State constitutions (each within its sphere) as paramount to all other laws, as rules of political action.

6th. The unqualified recognition and maintenance of the reserved rights of the several States, and the cultivation of harmony and fraternal good will, between the citizens of the several States, and to this end, non-interference by Congress with questions appertaining solely to the individual States, and non-interference by each State with the affairs of any other State.

7th. The recognition of the right of the native-born and naturalized citizens of the United States, permanently residing in any Territory, to vote, to frame their constitution and laws, and to regulate their domestic and social affairs in their own mode, subject only to the provisions of the Federal Constitution, with the privilege of admission into the Union whenever they have the requisite population for one Representative in Congress. *Provided*—That, none but those who are citizens of the United States, and who have a fixed residence in any Territory, ought to participate in the formation of the constitution, or in the enactment of laws for said Territory or State.

8th. An enforcement of the principle that no State or Territory ought to admit others than citizens of the United States to the right of suffrage, or of holding political office.

9th. A change in the laws of naturalization, making a continued residence of twenty-one years, of all not heretofore provided for, a indispensable requisite for citizenship hereafter, and excluding all paupers and persons convicted of crime, from landing upon our shores; but no interference with the vested rights of foreigners.

10th. Opposition to any union between Church and State; no interference with religious faith, or worship, and no test laws for office.

11th. Free and thorough investigation into any and all alleged abuses of public functionaries, and a strict economy in public expenditures.

12th. The maintenance and enforcement of all laws solemnly enacted, until said laws shall be repealed, or shall be declared null and void by competent judicial authority.

13th. A free and open discussion of all political principles embraced in our platform.

OLD DOBBIN.

HANNAH MORE.

Here's a song for old Dobbin, whose temper and worth
Are too rare to be spurned on the score of his birth.
He's a creature of trust, and what more should we
Look for in a horse that has been so long with us?

'Tis deeds and not blood make the man and the steed.
He was bred in the forest, and trained on the plain,
Where the thistle has clung to his flock and mane.
All ugly and rough, not a soul could copy
The pride of the herd-boy, the pet of the dame.

The summer had waned, and the autumn months rolled
Into those of stern winter, all dreary and cold;
But the north wind might whistle, the snow flake might dance,
The colts of the common were left to his chance.

Half starved and half frozen, the hail storm would pelt
Till his shivering limbs told the pangs that he felt;
But we piled the brush, and, though laughed at by all,
We filled him a manger and gave him a stall.

He was fond as a spaniel, and soon he became
The pride of the herd-boy, the pet of the dame.
You may judge of his fame, when his price was a crown;
But we christened him Dobbin, and called him our own.

He grew out of colthood, and, lo! what a change!
The knowing ones said it is mortally strange!
For the colt of the forest, the colt of the waste,
Attracted the notice of jockeys of taste.

The line of his symmetry was not exact;
But his paces were clever, his mind was compact;
And his always thick coat now appeared with a gloss,
Shining out like the gold that's been purged of its dross.

We broke him for service, and tamely he wore
Girth and rein, seeming proud of the thralldom he bore;
Every farm had a steed for all work and all hours,
And Dobbin, the sturdy bay pony, was ours.

He carried his master to battle his grain,
And ever returned with him safely again;
There was merit in that, for, deny it who may,
When the master could not, Dobbin could find his way.

The dairy-maid ventured her eggs on his back:
'Twas him, and him only, she'd trust with the pack.
The team horses jibed, the roadster played pranks,
So Dobbin alone had her faith and her thanks.

We fun-loving urchins would group by his side,
We might fewlessly mount him, and dangle 'er ride;
We might creep through his legs, we might pluck his long tail;
But his temper and patience were ne'er known to fail.

We would brush his bright hide till it was free from a speck,
We kiss'd his brow muzzled, and hugged his thick neck;
Oh! we prized him like life, and a heart-breaking sob
Ever burst when they threatened to sell our dear Dob.

He stood to the collar, and tugged up the hill,
With the pigs to the market, the grist to the mill;
With saddle or halter, in shaft or in trace,
He was stanch to his work, and content with his pace.

When the hot sun was crowning the tale of the year,
He was sent to the reapers with ale and good cheer;
And none in the corn-fields more welcome was seen
Than Dobbin, with his well-washed pannels, I ween.

Oh! those days of pure bliss shall I ever forget,
When we decked out his head with the azure rosette;
All France with joy to be off to the fair,
With Dobbin, good Dobbin to carry us there!

He was dear to us all, ay, for many long years;
But mercy! how's this! my eye's filling with tears,
Oh! how cruelly sweet are the echoes that start
When memory plays an old tune on the heart.

There are drops on my cheek, there's a throb in my breast,
But my song shall not cease, nor my pen take its rest;
Till I tell that old Dobbin still lives to be seen,
With his oats in the stable, his tares on the green.

His best years have gone by, and the master who gave
The stern yoke to his youth has enfranchised the slave,
So brouse on, my old Dobbin, no dream of the knife,
For the wealth of a king should not purchase thy life.

Horace Greely, it is well known, has taken
To farming. Last year, when in Massachusetts
attending the poultry show, he bought half a
dozen pure Cochins China eggs at \$6 a dozen,
which produced him six ugly ducks. An editor
from Maine, however, fared still worse.

He bought half a dozen eggs of "a new variety,"
which the dealer assured him would produce
"very rare birds." So they did, for they
were put under the very best hen, and in due
time came out—"what do you think!"

"I could not guess," said his friend,—"what
were they?"

"Land Turtles, and what was worse, as
soon as they were hatched, they seized upon
the old hen, and such a squalling never was
heard in any other hen's nest."

ANCIENT HISTORY.—"George Smith do you
recollect the story of David and Goliath?"

"Yes, Sir; David was a tavern-keeper,
and Goliath was an intemperate man."

"Who told you that?"

"Nobody. I read it, and it said that David
fixed a sling for Goliath, and Goliath got slewed
with it."

"Sambo, why am a locomotive engine like a
bed bug?"

"Because it runs on sleepers."

Heads of families must learn that the place
on earth best adapted to be a blessing is home;
and by example and wholesome restraint, they
must teach this truth to all under them.

In matters of conscience, first thoughts are
best; in matters of prudence, last thoughts are
best.

THE OLD MAN DREAMS.

BY O. W. HOLMES.

O for one hour of youthful joy!
Give back my twentieth spring!
I'd rather laugh a bright-haired boy
Than reign a grey-haired king!

Off with the wrinkled spoils of age!
Away with learning's crown!
Tear out life's wisdom-written page,
And dash its trophies down!

One moment let my life-blood stream
From boyhood's fount of flame!
Give me one giddy, reeling dream
Of life and love and fame!

My listening angel heard the prayer,
And calmly smiling, said:
"If I but touch thy silvered hair,
Thy lusty youth shall fade."

"But is there nothing in thy track
To bid thee fondly stay,
While the swift seasons hurry back,
To find the wished-for day?"

Ah! truest soul of woman kind!
Without thee, what were life?
One bliss I cannot leave behind,
I'll take—my—precious—wife!

The angel took a sapphire pen
And wrote in rainbow dew,
"The man would be a boy again,
And be a husband too!"

"And is there nothing yet unsaid
Before the change appears?
Remember, all their gifts have fled
With those dissolving years!"

Why, yes; for memory would recall
My fond paternal joys:
I could not bear to leave them all;
I'll take—my—girl—and—boys!

The smiling angel dropped his pen,
"Why this will never do;
The man would be a boy again,
And be a father too!"

And so I laughed—my laughter woke
The household with its noise—
And wrote my dream when morning broke,
To please the gray-haired boys.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE RUINED POTTER.

James Fielding was the son of a potter, and
bred up to his father's trade. He married
young—long before he could keep a wife—and
with both his parents' consent, or rather with
their forgiveness, as they could not help themselves.

For he, for as they said it was very natural
an' he might as do worse: 'twas, to be sure,
the first time, an' he belike he wouldn't do it
again. And so they cordially shook hands
with him, and pledged the pretty bride in a
flagon of Burton, and were both present at the
first child's christening. But the cholera
came soon afterwards, and took off the old man
and his wife. This was the opening scene of
James Fielding's sufferings—want—pestilence
—and death. His wife and himself, wretched
afterwards both seized with the disorder, and
though they recovered slowly, it was only to
find their father and mother, and first child
removed from their once comfortable home to
the churchyard, and they themselves with
feeble bodies and accumulated debts, which
had run on wildly during sickness. First
James was put into jail for the doctor's bill,
and then the landlord distrained for rent, and
turned them on the world: and so they were
ruined.

To be in prison, never serves a man; he
gets a habit of shifting and shuffling, and lean-
ing, and talking and idling; he has the short
hand in the pocket watch, and the hang-down
look of a jail companion: he is never a man
again. James Fielding came out of Stafford
jail, a changed character; more clever and less
capable of work—daintier, but not so refined—
prouder but not more honorable: the edge
was taken from the mind and given to the ap-
petites; nevertheless he was a fond father, for
he shortly became one again, and a loving
husband to a wife who doated on him. But a
thoroughly fallen man seldom rights himself,
and bankruptcy is a break up for life in the
constitution of successful industry. James
Fielding labored, but his toil was fruitless;
he found friends, but, one way or other, he let
in everybody who had anything to do with him.

By degrees, he got, as was natural, a very bad
character, and as is generally the case under
such circumstances, without altogether deserv-
ing it. He was an unfortunate, but not an
evil man; and we all know how falling bodies
quicken in their descent.

Still, he was a man born to suffer, and earn
his bread by the sweat of his brow. Men of all
countries, station, and fortune, labor—from
the serf to the lord—and Fielding's destiny
was only that of his sex. But the gentle,
pretty girl, whom he had taken from her
father's home to comfort and cherish, to keep
his fireside clean, and to nurse his little ones
around him,—her lot was not cast by God for
labor, for toil, for moil, and anguish; yet, who
can tell what arrows of grief pierced that wo-
man's heart during her twelve years' apprenticeship
to wisdom! Who shall describe the
womanly miseries, alas, too common in Eng-
land! of her daily shifts and struggles, her
pigny guant looks, her threadbare clothes in-
sufficient to protect her from the winter weath-
er, her hard day-labor, her sharp endurance of
her children's hunger, and forgetfulness of her
own: her long sad catalogue of distresses,
compared with which the pains of childbirth
and even the death of the child at the breast,
are nothing, being feminine sufferings.

This poor woe-begone mother stood before
good curate Godfrey, one of a noiseless way-
faring body of christian men who make a lit-
tle stir beyond their own parish; but are there
constantly felt and heard of; the true disciples
of the Father of the poor, the world's first
teacher of charity.

"He be goin' fast, indeed he be," said Mary
Fielding, speaking of the potter, who had been

down some weeks in a low fever. "Tis hard
to lose the father of one's children. I could ha-
ve borne any stroke but this'n. Everywhere is a
churchyard now—the life is dug out of me."

"Do not murmur, but think of the past. I
remember christening some of those children,
when he and you were full of health and joy. In
this journey of life, Mary, there is no hill
without its hollow. Your neighbor, Susan
Jackson, will not have to mourn the loss of a
husband, for she has never known the love and
protection of one; and when she goes, she will
not leave orphans to grieve for her. But, for
all that, Susan is very lonely and destitute, and
says nobody cares for her."

"Mayhap, but Susan Jackson can't be sorry
for what she never had; and poor folk didn't
ought to be fanciful. 'Tis me, sir, parlia! wi'
my husband, that should fret."

"But you should remember, Mary, that
when James and you were married, it was on
the condition you were to part one day. We
must not forget the ninety-nine favors because
the hundredth is grating. The Lord gave,
and the Lord taketh away."

"Oh, sir, 'tis beautiful to hear ye talk; you
always say summat so comfortin' feelin', an'
sensible like. One is ashamed to grumble
afore you, 'tis so selfish and ill-natured."

"But how the little one's Mary?"

"I can't say much for 'em, sir: they be but
poorly."

"They have had some food to-day I hope?"

"Tis early yet, sir." It was past mid-day.
"But indeed they hante well."

"Did they eat anything last night before
lying down?"

"Baby had a sup o' gruel out o' James' cup,
but Billy an' Jacky, an' t'other ent had noth-
ing."

"And you?"

"Oh, sir, God be praised, I am used to it.—
Ten years is a long 'prentice. 'Tis suppin'
how the famine feeds itself. An' then, the
children's cries, an' he's a dyin' drives the
thought away from me. I ant got the hard
stomach o' hunger, sir; 'tis unfeelin' in a
mother."

No wonder she did not feel the gnawings of
want; she had passed her being into other ex-
istences; she had lost her identity in the wife
and the mother.

"Well, we must do something for the
children, Mary."

"Oh, sir, I did na come for that. What I
wants is work. You ha' come atween us an'
death, many's a time. But indeed, what I am
here for, is, afore James goes I wish he could
see you, sir, an' talk wi' you a bit. His mind
be strange and uncomfortable like, about re-
ligion."

"I thought him a believer, Mary."

"Mayhap he be; but men tell their wives
what, if they could, they would hide from God,
an' I ha' heard him say awful things; he war
always so courageous like. Howsomedeever,
his hour be come, an' he ha' losed his darin',
an' he believes jist like a child. I thought if
he could o' see you, sir."

"Mr. Godfrey rang the bell. An aged but
notable servant woman came."

"Martha, bring Mrs. Fielding a little warm
bread and milk."

"Oh, no, no, sir! 'Tis only my way, what
you see in my face, I was always palish like—
leastways this many a day."

Martha, who had promptly obeyed her mas-
ter, returned in a few minutes with a basin.

"There, take that gently, Mary, it will warm
you."

"Will you forgive me sir? Indeed I can-
not. It 'ud choke me. The child'en—the
poor hungry child'en, sir!"

"They shall be thought of." Mr. Godfrey
left the room, returning shortly after with his
long surtout buttoned closely up, and a small
parcel in his hand.

"This contains a loaf, Mary—and something
else—you know what to do with it. Let me
have the ticket when I call, which will be in
the course of the evening. Leave me now."

The comforted mother looked on Heaven's
minister and then up to heaven, and passed
noiselessly through the small door, with faith,
hope, and maternal love—the three strongest
pulses of the heart—to support her. She had
the only full and perfect lesson of religion—
charity. But she did not know, until she got
to the pawnshop, that the poor curate had taken
his only waistcoat from his back to feed her
children. Then, indeed, the tide of religion
came strong upon her. So true it is, that one
act of kindness is worth a volume of sermons
in converting people. The curate's vest was a
baptismal robe to the unregenerated spirit of
Mary Fielding, the free-thinking potter's wife.

It was on an evening in the middle of June
that Mr. Godfrey passed along to the potter's
cottage. There had been some smart refresh-
ing showers during the day, and the grass was
healthily green, and the flowers were vigorous
and balmy, and here and there was the restless
uncy chirp in the tree or hedge, of the young
bird in its nest. The sheep were settling down
for the night in the meadows; and the cows,
after the milking, were scattered over the dis-
tant pastures. At intervals there was an un-
yoked horse exulting in abundance and free-
dom. The poor, saluted Mr. Godfrey as he
passed, and the rich cordially greeted him, for
he was universally beloved.

"All God's works are beautiful and happy,"
said he to himself, as he wound among the
green lanes, and gazed upon the broad benign-
ant sky. "Man alone makes the world mis-
erable. I cannot think the design of Providence
was to make the chief of a joyous crea-
tion wretched: there must be some key to hu-
man felicity. The departing sun shines on
these dingy cottages, and the few straggling
flowers bloom cheerfully, and cast their sweet-
ness abroad on the air. Outside is God's
work; within, is man's."

And the curate entered the cabin of James
Fielding the potter.

There had evidently been preparations to re-
ceive him. The clay floor was newly sprinkled
and swept, and the few articles of crockery and

china, nearly all-misshappen, or otherwise de-
fective, were as clean as the pebbles in a river.
The children's faces, hands and feet—for they
had no shoes—were all fresh from the wash-
ing-basin, and their hair was sleekly combed across
their foreheads. There was evident poverty,
but an equally evident wish to conceal it. Not
a vestige of furniture or ornament was in the
room beyond the few articles of earthenware
mentioned; all the rest, to the three-legged
stool for the baby had either been sold or
burned for fuel. There were three or four
hassocks of hay for seats, but these, too, had been
preyed on for fuel, and ran out at the side;
and there were some layers of chipped dried
up straw, as a bed in the corner. On this was
stretched the dying man. The eldest boy ran
to borrow a chair as Mr. Godfrey entered, and
the thrifty housewife had just drawn the old
rags from the three lower panes of the glassless
and only window in the hovel, to let the sun
and air in. This was the abode of an English-
man in the heart of England.

The patient had been propped up somewhat
on his straw, and a neighbor had shaved him
and lent him a shirt, which though old, was
clean. So, what with well-washed skin and
combed hair, and a cup of refreshing tea, he
was prepared to receive the curate's visit in
something of a decent and christian manner.—
One of the boys was in or rather on the bed—
for there was no covering—when sheer naked-
ness. He partly nestled in the straw and was
partly concealed by the rags taken from the
window; he was contented and happy, for he
had the blessing of a full meal—a rarity in the
hut of the dying potter.

The curate took the chair borrowed for him,
placed it by the bedside, and leaned towards
the sick man.

"Well James, how do you feel now?"

"Better, sir, thank you, but still weakly.—
God will bless you for what you ha' done. 'Tis
many a long day sir! I could prove my grati-
tude to anybody."

"Never mind that. The searcher of all
hearts knows your intentions, James."

"Ye—true! But d'ye think God heeds a
poor critter like me?"

"Undoubtedly. Our father."

"Ah! Good—good. But I never found a
true friend but Him and yourself, sir—they all
forsook and misbelieved me. I never was as
bad as people made me. He knows that, and the
children. One's heart, is a fair assize."

"True, a fond husband and a kind father
cannot be a very bad man. I never believed
you ill-disposed, Fielding."

"No, bless thee for it, and He will bless
thee. Ye ha' made me a christian; the ways
o' the world made me an infidel long ago.—A
man kindly treated, feels like a christian sir."

"But we must give up resentments, now.
I see by your countenance you will soon meet
your God. Prepare, Fielding, for that great
judgment."

"Yes, I know it will come soon, an' that ha'
changed me. But, indeed, sir, I am awary of
the world. If it war not for her and the child-
ren, I had gone years back."

"The christian religion always supposes
poverty and suffering, James. Were all the
world sinless and happy, the atonement had
been useless."

"I can well believe this o' thee sir. If yer
were dumb an' blind, yer han' would preach;
'tis the on'y sarmit as goes home to a hungry
man. Fine words be o' small account. But
when a rich person, or a bishop or such, as
never gives an' never suffers, lets starvin poor
fellows like me to bear their crosses, as the on-
ly road to heaven, it looks like humbug sir—
if heaven is to be won by poverty—sartinly
nothing is so easy for 'em as to give all the ha-
mor more than enough, to feed the hungry, an' com-
fort the afflicted."

"Ah, James, this is bad grace in a dying
man. It is enough for every one to look to
himself; to bear his own burden, and to know
that in the midst of trial, and sorrow, and
suffering, he can have recourse to One who know
them all on earth. This, surely, is fair com-
fort."

"If it be, 'tis 'tis at the point I am at now,
a man feels he must believe in some religion,
an' there is none so nat'l like as our own. A
dying man is not a doubter. I wish I ha' been
o' this way o' thinkin' long ago—'twould ha'
made me content—an' a contented man is a
regular man, an' a regular man is a toilsome
man, an' a toilsome man is a thriving man;
but when one begins in grumblin' one ends
wi' sorrow. Mary dear g' me a drink. I feel
faintish."

The curate took the tepid from the
yearning and attentive wife's hand, and the
fevered patient, from the broken spoon held
to his mouth, drained the vessel greedily, till
the few leaves at the strainer whizzed with
their dryness. As he drank, Godfrey had an
opportunity of observing his countenance.—
"This man," said he to himself, "was formed
for a lofty destiny, but with him ignorance has
marred nature. When will man vindicate the
purposes of God to his fellows? When will
England provide education for all her people?
As these thoughts passed rapidly through his
mind, the sick man spoke with a faint
voice, but with renewed energy: "the spirit
war willing but the flesh war weak," well, sir,
I know I am a dyin'. I never was a coward,
but I does fear death. 'Tis like a dark night
—there be none about you but spirits."

"Keep your eyes steadily on your guiding
star James. That light sufficeth."

"I believe sir. O Lord help my unbelief!"

"Thank Heaven for those words," said the
curate; "and now, Fielding, since you are in
this good frame of mind, I must tell you one
thing that will lighten your last moments.—
Old Mrs. Williams is getting too aged for the
parish school, and as she is to retire on a small
pension, I have secured the post for Mary. I
know she will fill it well. This will keep the
wolf from the door, and I will look to the little
ones. So you see things are not so bad as you
expected. You will leave those dear to you
pretty middling off, and they will remain, un-